

**Remarks of
United States Ambassador Asif J. Chaudhry**

Rezina District Court Ribbon-cutting Ceremony

Thursday, December 4, 2008

Deputy Prime Minister Mejinschi, Minister Pirlog, esteemed members of the judiciary, other honored guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I am very pleased to be here today at the official opening of the redesigned and renovated Rezina District Court.

This is the second renovated court facility to be inaugurated under the MCC Threshold Country Program and it shows how modern and accessible a court can be.

The Rezina court, and the other pilot courts we are assisting, will help build citizens' faith in their justice system. These well-designed court facilities will build greater trust among Moldovan citizens, as citizens will have an opportunity to sit in a court room, not in judges' offices, to witness the proceedings. Now the judges' decisions will be published on the Internet and will be accessible in a public archive, making the judicial system more transparent to the average citizen. Furthermore, the court's public services will now be more accessible, more comfortable and more secure. And the court's management and information systems have been improved, to help judges and court personnel to carry out their functions in a timely and efficient manner.

The new automated procedures will randomly distribute cases. New tools such as "bench books" will improve the consistency and completeness of judicial decisions. These changes will help demonstrate to citizens that it doesn't matter who you are, justice is the same for everyone. The new court we open today is a symbol of growing Moldovan pride in the rule of law.

Some of what we see are physical, tangible improvements.

Beyond the tangible surroundings, this new court will have a positive and profound psychological impact on both judges and the citizens who are seeking justice.

The Rezina District Court renovation is just one of the challenging components of Moldova's Millennium Challenge Corporation Threshold Program, which is administered by our U. S. Agency for International Development.

We are nearing the end of the Threshold Program, but we continue to help the Government of Moldova in fighting corruption through greater transparency and greater involvement of citizens in governance.

We know from our own experience in the United States that increasing transparency, reducing corruption, and making government answerable to the people takes time and requires constant vigilance. It is an ongoing commitment that must be continually reinforced and re-stated.

The United States is pleased to have the opportunity to be of assistance to Moldova in this important effort. I am equally pleased to join with you in celebrating the milestone reached here in Rezina. Your work is helping not only to improve this district court, but also to foster a sense of professionalism and purpose among all of those working in the judicial system.

We look forward to seeing other courts throughout the country embrace and replicate the changes introduced here in Rezina. Once again, Congratulations!